



Lucketts School, now a Community Center

Chapter 11

County Operations

The Preservation Plan sees the need to emphasize the importance of heritage preservation among County employees through a variety of programmatic changes and initiatives such as making it an integral part of their performance plans and assessments. A critical aspect of development review pertains to the training of County staff in the identification and review of land development application for the preservation of heritage resources and their settings.

To implement the recommendations pertaining to the review of land development applications, the County also recommends the creation of a management structure that will draw together public and private organizations from a variety of fields.

The Heritage Commission is the primary organization to be established by the County to implement the Heritage Preservation Plan. The Heritage Commission will be composed of members from various County agencies and private organizations that work in such fields as heritage preservation, tourism and business development. The overarching function of this Commission will be to oversee the long-term implementation of the Preservation Plan and to serve in an advisory capacity on the day-to-day preservation related activities of the County, such as the review of land development applications.

In addition to this Commission, the County calls for the creation of a Preservation Resource Center, composed of experts in various fields who can offer design services related to preservation to public and private entities. Both organizations will be housed within the County.

County Operations Policies

1. The County will improve its system of resource identification and protection so that all branches of the County government have as part of their responsibilities the protection of our heritage resources. No branch of county government should be ignorant of just what and where these resources are. No “permitting” should take place at any level that does not reflect staff work that has taken into account all county heritage resources.
2. The County shall require each agency to annually assess its impact on heritage preservation efforts, outlining protection successes and failures and recommendations for anticipated issues.
3. Performance plans for County employees shall require training and ongoing awareness of County heritage preservation policy and ordinances. Orientation for new County employees will include materials and presentations on the County’s heritage resources.
4. The County will offer continuing education classes on heritage preservation design guidelines, policies and regulations. Participation in these classes shall be in accordance with an established schedule.
5. The County will work with the Heritage Commission to establish a Preservation Resource Center or a centralized clearinghouse for preservation resource materials that would provide technical assistance to the citizens and organizations undertaking preservation activities in the County.
6. The establishment of a Preservation Resource Center, and/or resource materials, will help appropriate County agencies respond to citizen’s requests for assistance and address design issues within the County’s seven incorporated towns and villages.

7. The Preservation Resource Center will provide the following technical assistance:
 - a. Produce information materials such as brochures, and pamphlets on various issues pertaining to preservation
 - b. Make available County and other public documentation and resources to help trace the history of the site or structure
 - c. Provide information on available federal, state or local preservation assistance programs, both financial and otherwise
 - d. Provide information and assistance to property owners regarding the various preservation mechanisms such as rehabilitation, restoration, adaptive re-use, etc.
 - e. Assist owners of small properties in the development of Context Analysis Reports, the need for which will be determined on a case-by-case basis
8. The Preservation Resource Center will offer appropriate maintenance, repair and restoration information to builders such as that provided by the National Park Service. Such material should at a minimum be available at the Departments of Planning and Building and Development customer counters.
9. The Preservation Resource Center will include staff representatives from County agencies, primarily the Departments of Planning, Building and Development and Economic Development, to assist in the review of land development applications, expedite application review timelines, etc.
10. The members of the Preservation Resource Center will consist of experts in the field of preservation, including County staff, academics, architects, contractors and developers. The County will pay for the services offered by this group.
11. The Preservation Resource Center will be represented on the Heritage Commission.
12. Preservation Resource Center will establish a County Preservation Certification Program that will license or certify contractors to work in the preservation field. This will be combined with incentives to encourage property owners to use County licensed contractors. This is intended to ensure a high quality of preservation work in the County to maintain and/or enhance the historic authenticity of the resource.

Resource Recordation

The recordation and management of data collected through the various survey efforts and archaeological reports are critical follow-up steps to resource identification and an integral component of County operations.

In this regard, the County government has a unique record keeping and information management role. The Division of Purchasing and Support Services, through its Records Officer, is responsible for administering the Records Management program. Guidelines developed by the Library of Virginia (LVA) Records Management division have been used as a framework for creating county-specific records management policies and procedures. The LVA also provides services to support state and local government records management initiatives.

The County Records Center was established to provide economical storage and efficient and timely retrieval of stored records. The County's Records Center should continue to ensure that data is properly maintained and easily accessible and recognize the value of data as historic information. As office space is considerably more expensive, the County Records Center also works to remove inactive records from these spaces. Automated records systems and electronic records can greatly enhance an agency's productivity and customer service programs. However, it should be recognized by all administrators and records officers that the value of a record may not expire once a transaction has been finalized, a project completed, or a decision reached. Land records, development permits and applications, cultural and environmental resources, property assessments and tax payment information are all databases that over time become important historical records. Continued administrative, legal, and historical value must be considered before a record is removed or lost through the deterioration of the storage medium or technological obsolescence.

The County's information system should provide the public and various County departments and agencies a convenient means of researching property and events. Steps have been taken to improve the County's Land Management Information System, making certain pieces of information more readily available. Providing this and GIS information on the internet will also improve convenience; however, it is critical that such databases be kept up to date.

Resource Recordation Policies

1. The County will maintain a computerized database of heritage resources by parcel information. This database will identify parcels that are in and/or contiguous to historic districts. This data will be made available through the County's web-site for public information and to assist county staff in the review of land development applications.
2. The County Records Center shall provide economical storage and efficient and timely retrieval of stored records. The record-storage space shall be designed to maintain County records in a good condition.
3. Records scheduled for permanent retention shall be systematically maintained so that access to the information they contain is possible. Basic rules of archival management will be followed and records will be maintained in the order they were kept by the creating office.
4. The County will comply with the Virginia Public Records Act; and follow Library of Virginia (LVA) records management guidelines where appropriate to ensure that all records are managed properly.